



9.1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Mentor, while known for its retail base, has a diverse economic profile that includes traditional manufacturing, specialized manufacturing, as well as medical industries.

The Economic Development element identifies policies and strategies that will address the well being of Mentor – its neighborhoods, businesses and residents – in a local and regional economic context. It includes analysis of the local economy assessing its strengths and weaknesses in terms of the scope and character of the local employment base, the relationship between the local labor force and local opportunities for employment, and an assessment of current and future needs of the community.

9.2 ECONOMIC INFLUENCES

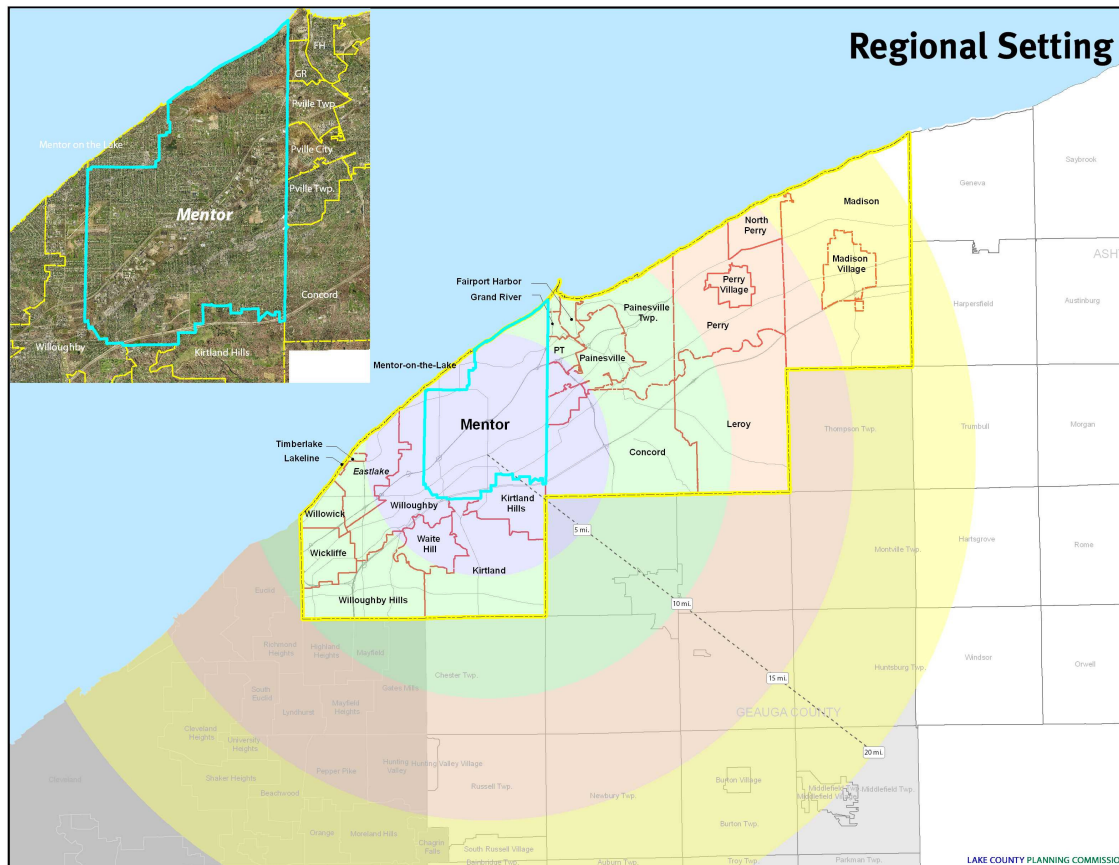
Lake County and Mentor are influenced by regional and national economic trends including unemployment and construction activity. At the time this plan was prepared, the United States and Ohio was in an economic recession with an unemployment rate near 10% and construction activity at a low point not seen in over twenty years. Strong leadership and the diverse economy and business patterns in Mentor has enabled the City to continue to provide the high quality of services to their citizens and provide programs and incentives to continue economic growth.

The local transportation network provides a competitive advantage for the City. Mentor's manufacturing and retail districts are easily accessible by exits off Interstate 90 at SR 306 & SR 615 (Center Street) and SR 2 at SR 306, SR 615 (Center Street) & Heisley Road. The planned improvements to SR 2 will also enhance access to key employment centers. Rail service is available off CSX with facilities in Cleveland, while Cleveland Hopkins International Airport is easily accessible via the interstate system.

A 20 mile radius around the Center Street/Mentor Avenue intersection encompasses the densely populated (both people and businesses) I-271 and SR 2 (Lakeland Freeway) corridors and the central business district of Cleveland making Mentor an attractive location for work and living (Map 9.1).

Other notable influences include the Great Lakes Mall area, Tyler Boulevard, and the emerging Heisley Road (Diamond Center) business node.

Map 9.1: Regional location



9.3 BASELINE INDICATORS

Existing conditions

The Mentor Exempted Village School District and City of Mentor are the largest employers. Contrary to regional trends, a review of Table 9.1 indicates a very significant manufacturing base in Mentor. Twelve of the top twenty employers in Mentor are in the manufacturing sector. The retail base is represented with three companies totaling 600 jobs. Small business, an integral component of a healthy community, is represented with 55% of the local businesses employing between 1-9 people.

Data from the City of Mentor, US Census and State of Ohio reveal the following highlights of the City's economic position:

Table 9 1. Largest Employers

Mentor Exempted Village School District (1,045)
City of Mentor (928)
Steris Corporation (809)
PCC Airfoils (484)
Avery Dennison Corporation (400)
Lincoln Electric (354)
Deepwood Center (340)
Component Repair Technologies (285)
Kmart (236)
JC Penney (210)
Wiseco Piston Co. (203)
US Endoscopy (202)
Source One Healthcare Technologies (200)
Wal-Mart Stores (200)
Royal Plastics (200)
Worthington Precision Metals (200)
Beech Technology Systems (200)
Mill-Rose Co. (200)
Cleveland Construction (187)
Altercare of Mentor (185)
<i>City of Mentor, 2009.</i>

- 2,148 Total business establishments
- 8,439 Total employees
- 55% Percent of businesses with 1-9 employees
- 1% Percent of business with 250-499 employees
- 13.2 % Percent of employees in manufacturing
- 24 % Percent of employees in retail sector
- 11.2% June 2009 Ohio unemployment rate
- 9.5% June 2009 Lake Co. unemployment rate
- 8.4% June 2009 Mentor unemployment (Bureau of Labor Market Information)

Workforce / Employment by Industry (Mentor residents)

According to the 2000 US Census, Mentor's workforce has increased by 2,727 workers since 1990. The occupational breakdown is similar to the county with the exception of those employed in 'management, professional and related occupations.' Mentor has over 36.1% of the workforce in this field compared to 32% in Lake County (Table 9.2). Regarding Industry segments, the two primary differences are in the 'construction' and 'retail trade' categories. Mentor has 1.3% less employees in the construction industry and 1.1% more employees in the retail trade sector.

Table 9.2 Employed Workforce Analysis (2000)

	Mentor		Lake County	
	#	%	#	%
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	27,399*	100.0	118,749	100
OCCUPATION				
Management, professional, and related occupations	9,882	36.1	38,147	32.1
Service occupations	3,051	11.1	15,445	13.0
Sales and office occupations	7,876	28.7	33,440	28.2
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	52	0.2	386	0.3
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	1,912	7.0	10,306	8.7
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	4,626	16.9	21,025	17.7
INDUSTRY				
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	92	0.3	668	0.6
Construction	1,309	4.8	7,250	6.1
Manufacturing	6,910	25.2	28,999	24.4
Wholesale trade	1,099	4.0	4,767	4.0
Retail trade	3,585	13.1	14,249	12.0
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	990	3.6	4,586	3.9
Information	512	1.9	2,106	1.8
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	1,949	7.1	8,488	7.1
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	2,245	8.2	9,467	8.0
Educational, health and social services	5,023	18.3	21,383	18.0
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	1,714	6.3	7,986	6.7
Other services (except public administration)	1,100	4.0	5,138	4.3
Public administration	871	3.2	3,662	3.1

Census.gov (2000)

* 3 year estimates (2005-07) from the US Census Bureau indicate approximately 26,083 persons.

Employment Trends

In Ohio, from 2000-2007, 248,000 (24.3%) jobs were lost in the manufacturing industry (Table 9.3). Other industries that suffered decreases include: retail trades (10.5%), information (18.2%) and utilities (14%). Industries that increased employment during the same period include transportation and warehousing (10%), management of companies (28%), and health care and social assistance (17%).

Table 9.3: Ohio Non-farm Employment Estimates 2000-2007

Industry Division	2000 Employment	2007 Employment	Net Change	Percent Change	2007 Location Quotient
Total Nonfarm Employment	5,624,700	5,424,400	-200,300	-3.6%	1.00
Total Goods-Producing	1,280,100	1,009,400	-270,700	-21.1%	1.15
Natural Resources & Mining	12,900	11,700	-1,200	-9.3%	0.41
Construction	246,100	224,900	-21,200	-8.6%	0.75
Manufacturing	1,021,000	772,800	-248,200	-24.3%	1.41
Total Service-Providing	4,344,600	4,415,000	70,400	1.6%	0.97
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	1,115,300	1,050,500	-64,800	-5.8%	1.00
Wholesale Trade	247,400	238,900	-8,500	-3.4%	1.01
Retail Trade	671,600	601,300	-70,300	-10.5%	0.98
Utilities	24,300	20,900	-3,400	-14.0%	0.96
Transportation & Warehousing	172,000	189,400	17,400	10.1%	1.06
Information	107,200	87,700	-19,500	-18.2%	0.73
Financial Activities	305,200	301,100	-4,100	-1.3%	0.92
Finance & Insurance	232,400	233,700	1,300	0.6%	0.96
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	72,800	67,400	-5,400	-7.4%	0.79
Professional & Business Services	644,900	665,900	21,000	3.3%	0.94
Professional & Technical Services	236,600	246,200	9,600	4.1%	0.82
Management of Companies & Enterprises	82,200	105,700	23,500	28.6%	1.45
Administrative & Waste Management	326,100	314,000	-12,100	-3.7%	0.94
Education & Health Services	680,300	790,200	109,900	16.2%	1.09
Educational Services	89,800	98,700	8,900	9.9%	0.85
Health Care & Social Assistance	590,500	691,500	101,000	17.1%	1.14
Leisure & Hospitality	483,300	500,000	16,700	3.5%	0.94
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	70,100	65,600	-4,500	-6.4%	0.84
Accommodation & Food Services	413,200	434,400	21,200	5.1%	0.96
Other Services	223,300	221,900	-1,400	-0.6%	1.03
Government	785,100	797,600	12,500	1.6%	0.91
Federal Government	87,200	77,100	-10,100	-11.6%	0.72
State Government	163,700	168,300	4,600	2.8%	0.83
Local Government	534,100	552,300	18,200	3.4%	0.98
Derived from CES estimates. Columns may not total due to rounding.					

Locally, the percentage of workers employed in manufacturing businesses in Lake County decreased by 24.2% (Table 9.4). According to the United States Census tally of county business patterns, businesses in Lake County employed 26,509 manufacturing workers in 2001 and 22,078 in 2006. The bulk of the businesses were in paper manufacturing, plastics and rubber products manufacturing, primary metal manufacturing, fabricated metal products manufacturing, machinery manufacturing, computer and electronic product manufacturing,

and transportation equipment manufacturing (Table 9.5). The majority of these business types are located in Mentor.

Projections from the state Department of Development envision a decline in manufacturing employment for Lake

County in the future, to 23,900 workers in 2010, 22,800 in 2020, and 21,800 in 2040. More than likely, these trends will carry over into Mentor.

Table 9.4 Manufacturing Employment 1995-2006

Year	Lake County employment			Ohio employment	
	Manuf. workers	% of all workers	% change	Manuf. workers	% change
1995	28,134	24.7%	N/A	1,126,628	N/A
1996	28,812	24.8%	2.4%	1,121,000	-0.5%
1997	29,184	24.5%	1.3%	1,118,370	-0.2%
1998	29,064	24.0%	-0.4%	1,121,121	0.2%
1999	28,457	23.3%	-2.1%	1,113,021	-0.7%
2000	29,113	23.4%	2.3%	1,103,840	-0.8%
2001	26,509	21.6%	-8.9%	982,577	-11.0%
Change 1995-2001	-1,625	N/A	-5.8%	-144,051	12.8%
2002	23,314	19.6%	-12.1%	904,838	-8.2%
2003	22,140	18.2%	-5.0%	864,280	-4.5%
2004	22,063	17.85	-0.3%	845,662	-2.2%
2005	22,120	17.5%	0.1%	835,492	-1.2%
2006	22,078	17.4%	-0.2%	820,773	-1.8%
Change 2000-2006	-7,050	N/A	-24.2%	-283,325	-25.0%

(Ohio Department of Development / Office of Strategic Research)

Table 9.5 Lake County manufacturing employment patterns 2004

Industry	Employees	Annual Payroll	Establishments	Employment size class			
				1-19	20-99	100-499	500 and up
Food mfg	(C)	(D)	12	11	1	0	0
Paper mfg	1,059	\$63,008,000	9	2	2	5	0
Printing and related support activities	662	26,910,000	40	33	6	1	0
Petroleum and coal product mfg	(E)	(D)	4	2	1	1	0
Chemical mfg	743	39,922,000	21	7	13	1	0
Plastics and rubber products mfg	1,640	53,803,000	39	23	11	5	0
Nonmetallic mineral product mfg	384	20,832,000	25	21	3	1	0
Primary metal mfg	1,997	\$85,208,000	19	9	5	4	1
Fabricated metal product mfg	6,039	253,217,000	293	212	72	9	0
Machinery mfg	2,682	111,592,000	104	74	25	4	1
Computer and electronic product mfg	2,291	100,434,000	19	5	10	3	1
Electrical equip, appliance and component mfg	514	15,925,000	19	12	6	1	0
Transportation equip mfg	1,353	58,102,000	28	17	5	6	0
Furniture and related product mfg	137	4,544,000	21	20	1	0	0
Miscellaneous mfg	2,443	105,007,000	49	35	7	6	1
Undisclosed mfg.	(A)	(D)	11	11	0	0	0
Total	22,346	\$957,670,000	713	494	168	47	4

(D) - Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual companies

Employment-size classes are: (A) 0 to 19, (B) 20 to 99, (C) 100-249, (E) 250-499, (F) 500 to 999.

(US Census Bureau)

In the event of large scale decreases in the local manufacturing base, as forecasted by the State of Ohio, other land use strategies should be encouraged to locate to the City for economic development. These should include office and high tech parks with a focus on healthcare, bioscience, advanced manufacturing, and alternative energy

engineering/manufacturing. Table 9.6 forecasts the continued employment trends as noted above and currently evident in the US and NE Ohio from 2006-2016; decrease in manufacturing and an increase in computer technologies, professional offices and specialty services. While overall employment is projected to increase by 3.5%, employment in two of the City's larger employer segments, 'manufacturing' and 'retail trade' is projected to decrease. This loss may be offset by the projected 11.4% increase in the 'professional and business services' industry. Other industries projected for employment gains include construction (5.2%), wholesale trade (8.7%), arts, entertainment and recreation (15.5%) and health care (19.7%). These industries already have a strong presence in the city and should be emphasized in future economic development decision-making.

Table 9.6 Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor MSA: Industry Employment Projections Report, 2006-2016

<i>Industry</i>	<i>2006 Annual Employment</i>	<i>2016 Projected Employment</i>	<i>Change in Employment 2006-2016</i>	<i>Percent Change 2006-2016</i>
Total	1,126,900	1,165,900	39,000	3.5%
Goods-Producing	194,500	168,800	-25,700	-13.2%
Natural Resources and Mining	6,700	6,400	-300	-4.5%
Construction	40,300	42,400	2,100	5.2%
Manufacturing	147,500	120,000	-27,500	-18.6%
Transportation equipment manufacturing	18,400	12,000	-6,400	-34.8%
Service-Providing	865,500	927,500	62,000	7.2%
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	194,200	198,100	3,900	2.0%
Wholesale trade	53,000	57,600	4,600	8.7%
Retail Trade	109,200	106,600	-2,600	-2.4%
Transportation and warehousing	28,400	30,500	2,100	7.4%
Utilities	3,500	3,300	-200	-5.7%
Information	18,600	17,600	-1,000	-5.4%
Financial Activities	74,800	77,900	3,100	4.1%
Finance and insurance	58,600	59,400	800	1.4%
Real estate and rental and leasing	16,300	18,500	2,200	13.5%
Professional and Business Services	137,500	153,200	15,700	11.4%
Professional and technical services	54,700	62,900	8,200	15.0%
Management of companies and enterprises	20,200	21,900	1,700	8.4%
Administrative and waste services	62,600	68,400	5,800	9.3%
Education and Health Services	167,200	199,400	32,200	19.3%
Educational services, private	24,200	28,300	4,100	16.9%
Health care and social assistance	142,900	171,100	28,200	19.7%
Hospitals, private	55,700	63,800	8,100	14.5%
Leisure and Hospitality	94,200	101,800	7,600	8.1%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	14,200	16,400	2,200	15.5%
Accommodation and food services	80,000	85,400	5,400	6.7%
Other Services	43,200	40,000	-3,200	-7.4%
Government	135,800	139,700	3,900	2.9%
Federal Government	14,400	13,600	-800	-5.6%
State Government	6,800	6,500	-300	-4.4%
Local Government	114,600	119,700	5,100	4.5%
Local Education Employment	55,800	56,300	500	0.9%
Self-employed, private household and unpaid family workers	66,900	69,600	2,700	4.0%

Source: Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Bureau of Labor Market Information, March 2009.

Unemployment

Mentor, along with the northeast Ohio region, has experienced a dramatic increase in unemployment since 2008 (Table 9.7). Through a combination of measures, the employment base has been shifting from reliance on traditional heavy manufacturing by expanding the economic base with small and medium sized light-industrial and highly specialized technical firms, thus lessening the impact of the economic downturn. New retail opportunities have also provided recent employment opportunities in the City.

Table 9.7 Unemployment Rates (%)

	<i>June 08</i>	<i>May 09</i>	<i>June 09</i>
Mentor	5.5	8.3	8.4
Lake County	6.1	9.5	9.5
Ohio	6.6	10.4	11.2

Bureau of Labor Market Information

Despite the loss of jobs, the city's rate of 8.4% compares favorably to the State of Ohio (11.2%). The marketing of the City as well as the efforts of organizations such as the Mentor Economic Assistance Corporation, and the city's economic development strategy, has sustained Mentor's economic position in the current economic climate.

Retail

Mentor's historical strength in the retail market was significantly due to the early regional dominance of the Great Lakes Mall and the Plaza Blvd corridor. While competition has increased, the City is ranked 6th in the state for retail volume sales. A low county sales tax and diverse retail market place are two reasons for the high ranking. In addition, new retail development has continued to prosper in Mentor, most notably in the eastern portion of the City with the addition of Diamond Center, Creekside Commons, and most recently, Target. (Map 9.2). Several small multi-tenant retail centers have been completed over the last decade.

In Lake County, 14,680 were employed in the retail sector in 2000, with total wages of \$303,687,000. The number employed in the retail sector dropped slightly to 14,591 in 2001, with wages of \$306,651,000. As noted above 24% of Mentor's workforce is in the retail sector.

There is almost 700,000 square feet of retail space in 27 shopping centers in Mentor which range in size from 11,000 to 45,800 square feet. The vacancy among these convenience centers is 13 percent, a 2 percent increase from the 2008 report. The overall vacancy rate in the City of Mentor's 37 shopping centers is approximately 8 percent, up from 5 percent in 2008.

At the time this plan was written (2008-09), the country was declared to be in an economic recession. Consumer spending is declining which may impact retail markets. It is too early to note, but vacancy rates could increase in the commercial core.

The retail sector is a major focal point of many Lake County communities, including Mentor. Being the most visible land use, its physical configuration and condition are critical in projecting a city's image. The economic health of a city is often associated with the ability of its business districts to thrive and remain prosperous. The retail stores along Mentor Avenue serve the important function of maintaining the social character of a community by creating a

sense of place where residents can satisfy their consumer needs and encounter other neighborhood residents. This so-called “marketplace” function is critically important to community vitality.

The dynamic nature of retailing in Northeast Ohio is evidenced by frequent announcements of store closings, new construction, and concerns about the impact of both. Although retail development projects are generated by the private sector, public officials are often requested to provide assistance in the form of rezoning, transportation and infrastructure enhancements, or financial assistance such as tax abatement.

It should be noted that retailers are not often sold by such incentives. Retail and restaurant site selection specialists often use a formula to determine whether a market is a viable location for a store or restaurant. Criteria determining an ideal location are mostly quantitative, and usually include the following:

- Population living in a certain radius (mileage and driving time).
- Percentage of families versus singles in a certain radius.
- Average family and household income in a certain radius.
- Average age of the population in a certain radius.
- Cumulative income of all people in a certain radius.
- Education level in a certain radius.
- Number of jobs in a certain radius.
- Traffic volume at a location.
- Utility availability at a location.
- Proximity of other mid- and high-end retail development (positive).
- Proximity of low-end commercial development (negative).
- Property size and geometry.
- Potential return on investment.

Each of these criteria carries a different weight, depending on the type of business. A bookstore may place a greater emphasis on the education and income in an area, while chain restaurants often look at the employment base in the area, so they can profit from lunch as well as dinner business. Sewer service is more important for uses that generate plenty of wastewater, such as sit-down restaurants. Mentor should continue to carefully examine its demographic and site characteristics while pursuing economic development strategies to ensure long-term viability/stability with future businesses.

Relatively speaking

A mass of numbers listing square footage may seem meaningless, unless there is a point of reference that can be easily related to.

1,200 ^{sq ft}	typical 1950s-era single-family house in western Lake County
1,500 ^{sq ft}	Chinese carry-out restaurant, chain coffeehouse (Starbucks, Caribou)
2,400 ^{sq ft}	typical new single-family house in Lake County
3,000 ^{sq ft}	fast food restaurant, convenience store
5,000 ^{sq ft}	large new single-family house in Concord Township, sit-down chain restaurant (Applebee's, TGI Friday's)
11,000 ^{sq ft}	very large single-family house in Waite Hill, large chain drugstore (CVS, Walgreens, Rite Aid)
20,000 ^{sq ft}	big box pet supply store (PetSmart, Petco), office supply store (Staples, Office Max)
30,000 ^{sq ft}	big box bookstore (Barnes and Noble, Borders)
45,000 ^{sq ft}	small supermarket, home outfitting store (Bed Bath and Beyond)
57,600 ^{sq ft}	NFL standard football field
60,000 ^{sq ft}	big box sporting goods store (Dick's, Galyan's)
80,000 ^{sq ft}	large supermarket
100,000 ^{sq ft}	big box discount department store (Wal-Mart, Target)
150,000 ^{sq ft}	big box home improvement store (Home Depot, Lowe's)
220,000 ^{sq ft}	hypermarket (Wal-Mart Supercenter, Target Superstore)
700,000 ^{sq ft}	small shopping mall
1,250,000 ^{sq ft}	Great Lakes Mall

All businesses seek a high potential return on investment. A store may make a profit in Mentor, but if there is the opportunity of a greater return in another area, the chain will locate an outlet there instead, not developing in the City until most of the other more lucrative locations have been developed.

The mantra of commercial developers is “retail follows rooftops.” The density of housing (shoppers) and presence of countless national retailers will continue to attract the attention of other retailers scouting for new store locations.

The changing nature of the retail industry is having profound implications on the land use patterns of Lake County. Older communities are experiencing under-utilization and vacancies in storefronts along major retail corridors resulting in loss of local retail services, decreasing tax revenues and suburban blight. At the same time, newer suburban and outlying areas continue to encounter retail development which has often led to increased traffic congestion, the need for costly infrastructure improvements, and degradation of land, air and water quality. This scenario may occur in the future within the city limits. While the efforts to maintain a strong retail base at Great Lakes Mall is extremely important, the continued expansion of alternative commercial and retail opportunities in the eastern portion of the city may decrease the customer base of the mall and Plaza Blvd. corridor. Often the opening of new businesses, in Mentor or other communities, comes at the expense of other areas within the city.

Mentor must counter these trends by proactively working with landowners/business owners along Mentor Avenue to accommodate their needs to the fullest extent possible without compromising the long-term vision of the city. Mixed-use zoning in the areas surrounding the Great Lakes Mall is a possibility (see Chapter 4).

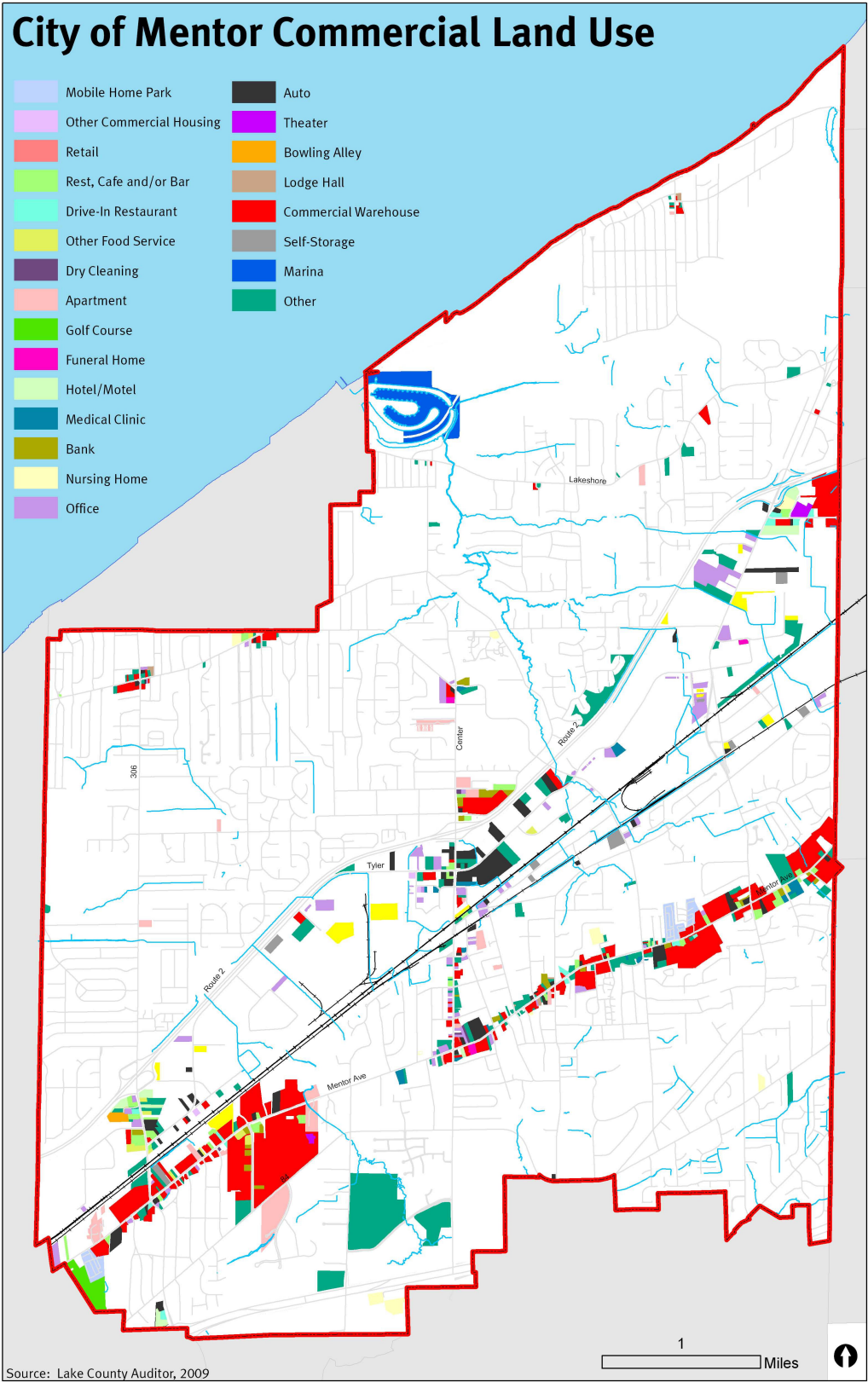
Manufacturing

The 2009 Harris Ohio Industrial Directory compiled by the Harris Infosource Company indicates the State of Ohio experienced a less than 1% decrease in manufacturing firms between June, 2007 and June, 2008. Similarly, the number of manufacturing firms in the region (Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina Counties) decreased by less than 1%. Lake County experienced a 1.8% decrease (15 companies) in the number of manufacturing firms; while Mentor experienced a decrease of six (6) manufacturing firms (see Table 9.8).

During the same time period, the State of Ohio experienced a decrease of 1.2% (11,745 jobs) while the region increased 2.2% in manufacturing employment. Lake County experienced a 4.2% increase in manufacturing employment, while the City of Mentor's increase was 4.3% or 351 jobs.

In Mentor, over a five year time horizon (2005-2009), the number of companies engaged in manufacturing increased by 8, yet manufacturing employment declined by 302 jobs (17%) (Table 9.8). This may be a reflection of the impact of technology on the manufacturing sector and the ability to maintain, if not increase, productivity with fewer employees.

Map 9.2: Commercial areas



The Measuring & Analyzing Instruments industries added 1,212 jobs and increased from 14 to 21 companies. Electronic & Other Electrical Equipment added 85 jobs and Paper & Allied Products added 78 jobs. Industrial & Commercial Machinery represents approximately 40% of the manufacturing companies in the city; and accounts for the largest manufacturing job loss (525 jobs). Rubber & Misc. Plastics decreased by four (4) companies, and experienced a loss of 366 jobs. The Primary Metals Industries has declined by three (3) companies yet has experienced a 333 person decrease in employment. Misc. Manufacturing decreased by two (2) companies and resulted in a decrease of 324 jobs.

As noted in Chapter 4, in 2008, approximately 1,460,165 sq. ft. (13%) of the industrial space in Mentor was available. The largest available space is 490,000 square feet in the former Caterpillar building, 416,000 square feet in the former George Worthington building, 180,000 square feet in the former CE Tyler building. These “industrial dinosaurs” account for approximately 3/4 of the total available space in the City. The City of Mentor’s “windshield” survey indicated approximately 2.1 million square feet of vacant industrial space; virtually unchanged from 2008. It is estimated that this figure may increase slightly in 2009 amid current economic conditions.

Table 9.8 Number of Employees & Companies (manufacturing sector), Mentor

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	% Change 2005-2009	Net Change 2005-2009
Number of Employees	8,741	8,304	8,969	8,088	8,439	3.4%	-302
Number of Companies	286	288	298	284	278	2.8%	-8

Table 9.9 Number of Companies by Manufacturing Sector, Mentor

SIC Code		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	% Change 2005-2009	Net Change 2005-2009
20	Food & Kindred Products	2	3	4	2	2	0.0%	0
21	Tobacco Products	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0
22	Textile Mill Products	0	0	1	2	2	200.0%	2
23	Apparel & Other - Finished Products	8	8	7	5	5	-37.5%	-3
24	Lumber and Wood Products	5	5	6	4	3	-40.0%	-2
25	Furniture & Fixtures	4	4	3	4	4	0.0%	0
26	Paper & Allied Products	3	5	4	6	4	33.3%	1
27	Printing, Publishing & Allied Industries	17	19	17	20	20	17.6%	3
28	Chemicals & Allied Products	10	9	10	11	11	10.0%	1
29	Petroleum, Refining & Allied Industries	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0
30	Rubber & Misc. Plastics	17	17	14	9	13	-23.5%	-4
31	Leather & Leather Products	1	2	1	0	0	-100.0%	-1
32	Stone, Clay, Glass & Concrete Products	6	7	9	9	7	16.7%	1
33	Primary Metal Industries	7	7	8	4	4	-42.9%	-3
34	Fabricated Metal Products	32	31	28	34	32	0.0%	0
35	Industrial & Commercial Machinery	117	114	119	109	109	-6.8%	-8
36	Electronic & Other Electrical Equipment	19	21	26	22	21	10.5%	2
37	Transportation Equipment	7	6	8	8	5	-28.6%	-2
38	Measuring & Analyzing Instruments	14	17	19	21	21	50.0%	7
39	Misc. Manufacturing	17	13	14	14	15	-11.8%	-2
	Total	286	288	298	284	278	-2.8%	-8

City of Mentor

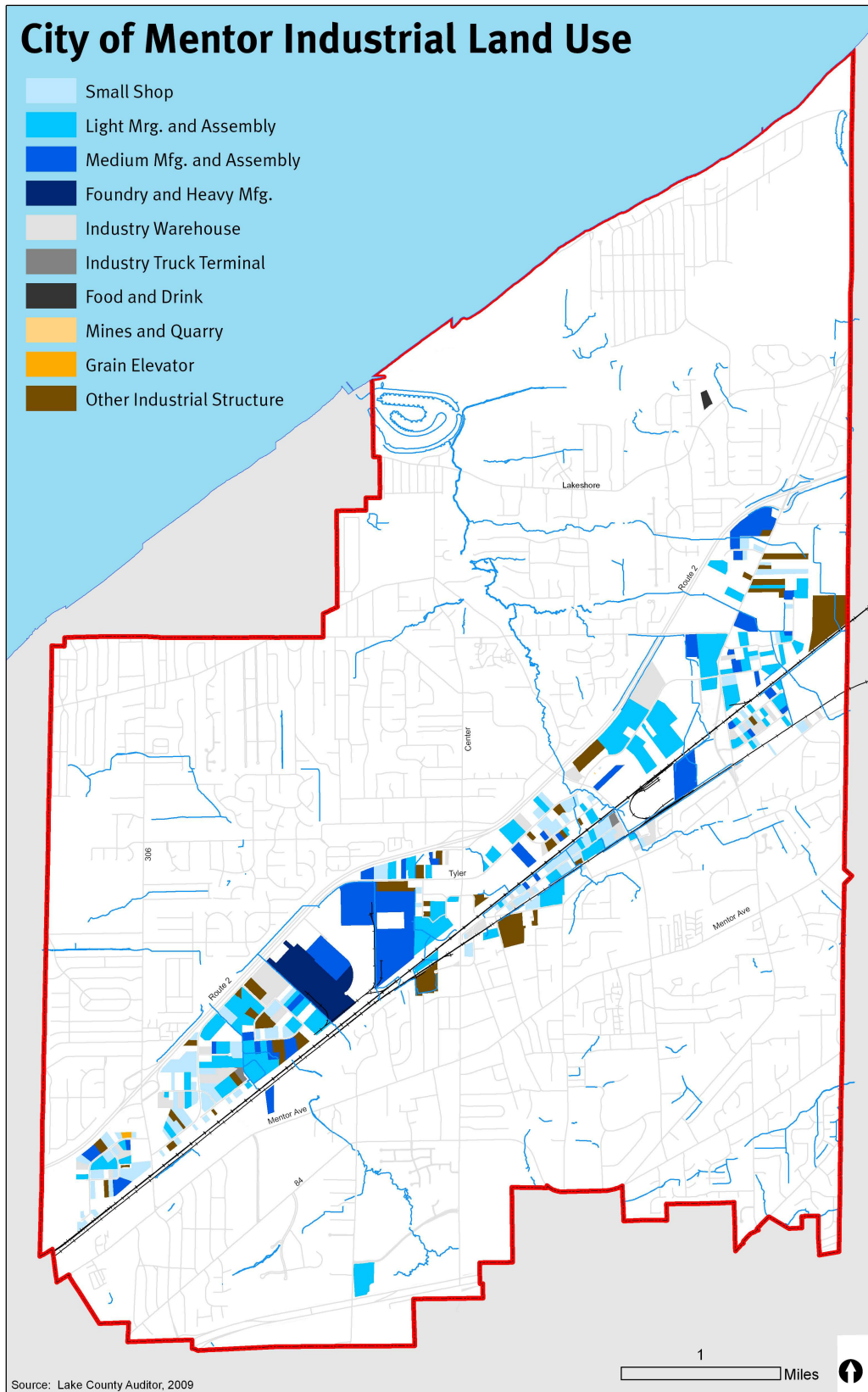
Table 9.10 Number of Employees by Manufacturing Sector , Mentor

SIC Code							% Change	Net Change
		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2005-2009	2005-2009
20	Food & Kindred Products	17	19	22	5	5	-70.6%	-12
21	Tobacco Products	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0
22	Textile Mill Products	0	0	5	10	10	1000.0%	10
23	Apparel & Other - Finished Products	56	51	31	15	15	-73.2%	-41
24	Lumber and Wood Products	66	61	61	51	11	-83.3%	-55
25	Furniture & Fixtures	43	39	34	20	109	153.5%	66
26	Paper & Allied Products	207	202	295	348	285	37.7%	78
27	Printing, Publishing & Allied Industries	252	250	252	313	314	24.6%	62
28	Chemicals & Allied Products	276	226	265	279	284	2.9%	8
29	Petroleum, Refining & Allied Industries	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0
30	Rubber & Misc. Plastics	836	973	523	411	470	-43.8%	-366
31	Leather & Leather Products	1	34	33	0	0	-100.0%	-1
32	Stone, Clay, Glass & Concrete Products	229	254	270	271	96	-58.1%	-133
33	Primary Metal Industries	396	180	314	157	63	-84.1%	-333
34	Fabricated Metal Products	663	661	531	594	584	-11.9%	-79
35	Industrial & Commercial Machinery	3,159	2,395	2,713	2,166	2,634	-16.6%	-525
36	Electronic & Other Electrical Equipment	731	838	890	742	816	11.6%	85
37	Transportation Equipment	354	383	525	622	405	14.4%	51
38	Measuring & Analyzing Instruments	828	1,298	1,757	1,826	2,040	146.4%	1212
39	Misc. Manufacturing	627	440	448	258	298	-52.5%	-329
	Total	8,741	8,304	8,969	8,088	8,439	-3.5%	-302

City of Mentor

The manufacturing industry continues to be an integral part of Mentor's economic portfolio. Tyler Blvd. and Heisley Road provide excellent locations for large and small scale manufacturing ventures (Map 9.3). Other areas exist for additional space if conditions warrant (current data and available sites available from the Economic and Community Development Department).

Map 9.3: Industrial areas



9.4 FUTURE BUSINESSES PATTERNS

Recreation as Economic Development

Communities across the Great Lakes region are beginning to view local water bodies as more than just water. They are recognizing water as a tourist amenity and asset. Many are taking action to preserve and protect river banks, coastal areas and wetlands and encouraging controlled development and public access to these highly desired amenities. The Mentor Lagoons, Mentor Harbor, Headlands Beach State Park and Lake Erie provide a built in competitive advantage for the City.

Without question, water features attract people to the city. Estimates from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources indicate approximately 1 million visitors to Headlands Beach State Park on an annual basis. Three yacht clubs/marinas exist in the Mentor Harbor. During the recreational boating season approximately 700 boaters are using the harbor area. Thousands of visitors (often from outside the community) frequent the Mentor Lagoons Nature Preserve and Marina on an annual basis. It is estimated that visitors to the SAMP area (see Ch. 7) spend approximately \$1.6 m – 8.2 m in the local economy (Sohngen, 2003).

From an economic development standpoint, the City must attract more people to these sites and develop additional amenities that generate revenue for the city. The construction of new overnight accommodations at the Diamond Center is a positive factor in capturing additional tourist dollars.

Data from the Lake County Visitors Bureau clearly reveals the economic impact provided by the

Table 9.11 Lake County Tourism Economic Impact

<i>Year</i>	<i>Receipts (output)</i>	<i>Employment</i>	<i>Payroll</i>	<i>Tax revenue</i>
1996	\$241,687,000	7,162	\$88,874,000	\$17,729,000
1998	\$261,639,000	7,497	\$96,350,000	\$19,241,000
1999	\$456,880,000	n/a	n/a	n/a
2000	\$477,160,000	n/a	n/a	n/a
2001		n/a	n/a	n/a
2002		n/a	n/a	n/a
2003	\$483,500,000	11,800	\$258,100,000	\$61,600,000
2004	\$494,200,000	12,800	\$287,100,000	\$67,600,000
2005	\$546,272,348	n/a	n/a	n/a
2006	\$568,751,047	n/a	n/a	n/a
2007	\$587,558,785	8,384	\$157,885,073	\$78,407,321

(Lake County Visitor's Bureau)

tourism industry (Table 9.11). Tourism receipts fall into the categories of transportation (such as water, air, ground, and service stations), retail (such as gift shops and general merchandise), eating and drinking places, lodging, and amusement/recreation (such as golf, museums, and parks).

The City should continue to pursue additional recreational lands, when feasible. Recent acquisitions of the Morton Salt property and Blackbrook Golf Course should be considered a component of the economic development equation in the City.

The information presented on the following page provides a brief economic impact analysis of the boating industry.

Boating impacts

National Statistics

- An estimated 68.84 million Americans participated in recreational boating during 2002.
- The number of recreational watercraft owned in the U.S. last year was estimated at 17.3 million, representing a 10 percent increase since 1988.
- An estimated \$30.3 billion was spent nationwide last year on the purchase of new and used boats, motors, engines, trailers, accessories and other marine related expenditures. This is nearly triple the \$11.2 billion that was spent in 1993.

Ohio Statistics

- Ohio ranks eighth nationally in the number of registered watercraft.
- Ohio's population increased 4.7 percent from 10,847, 115 in 1990 to 11,353,140 in 2000. Over the same period, the number of registered recreational watercraft increased 10.1 percent from 378,249 to a record 418,701.
- There are 500 marinas and boat dealerships and more than 55,000 docks and rack storage spaces present in Ohio. In 2008 Ohio ranked 9th nationally with 411,366 registered recreational watercraft, in the following general categories:
 - Powerboats & PWC: 78%
 - Canoes & Kayaks: 19%
 - Sailboats (no auxiliary power): 2%
- Watercraft registration statistics show a total of 80,640 Ohio-registered canoes/kayaks in 2008, up 34% from a total of 60,065 registered canoes/kayaks in 2003. Canoe/kayak registration fees generated total income of \$543,740 for the Waterways Safety Fund in 2008.
- A total of 44,464 personal jet-propelled watercraft were Ohio-registered in 2008, or 10.7% of all Ohio-registered watercraft. These craft collectively are commonly referred to by some of their commercial brand names such as Jet Ski or Waverunner.

Economic Impact

- Recreational boating in Ohio contributes an estimated \$1.5 billion annually to the state's economy and supports 19,500 jobs.
- Tourism is a \$38 billion industry – Ohio's 3rd largest industry - and one that supports the full-time equivalent of more than 450,000 Ohio jobs which generate nearly \$10 billion in direct earnings. More than half of all Ohioans are employed by the hospitality industry. Ohio is located within a one-day drive of 60% of the USA population.
- The Lake Erie region of northern Ohio includes 312 miles of shoreline. Lake Erie tourism generates \$10.7 billion in direct sales and employs 119,000 people in tourism-related businesses. It also generates \$430 million in state tax revenue and \$320 million in local tax revenues.
- More than 5.5 million is paid annually in watercraft registration fees. Ohio watercraft owners paid \$12.1 million in state fuel taxes during fiscal year 2001.
- Excluding boat payments, the typical boat owning household spends an average of \$5,625 annually on recreational boating.

The Average Boat/Boater

- An estimated 3 million Ohioans go boating each year, or nearly 1 in 4 Ohioans. Almost half of all Ohio residents (48%) have participated in recreational boating at least once in their lifetime, according to an Ohio State University study.
- The average Ohio boat owner is 52 years old with an annual household income of \$81,700 and 26.5 years of boating experience. Boat ownership by women increased from 2.6% in 2001 to 7% in 2007. (OSU)
- The average boat-owning household in Ohio has 2.13 boats. The average length of boats in Ohio is 19 feet and the average age is 16 years. The average engine size for powerboats is 160 horsepower.

(Adapted from Boating in Ohio Fact Sheet, Ohio Department of Natural Resources whose sources include: Boating Associations of Ohio; Census / Bureau; National Marine Manufacturers; ODNR Division of Watercraft; Ohio Division of Travel and Tourism; Ohio Sea Grant)

New Era of Manufacturing

As noted by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, “employment in goods-producing industries is expected to continue to decline, with heaviest losses in manufacturing. Manufacturing will remain, but will change. Improved productivity may mean that future production workers will need more high-tech skills. New technologies for green energy efforts could produce more jobs.”

Future economic development and workforce attraction strategies should focus on emerging high growth industries in healthcare, bioscience, alternative energy and advanced “white collar” manufacturing. More specifically, the City should consider aligning their resources with the following segments identified by the Ohio Business Roundtable .(<http://development.ohio.gov/strategicplan/documents/WorldClassOhio-OhioBusinessRoundtable.pdf>, 2003):

Advanced Materials

- High-performance materials for structural components: These materials have a relatively high strength-to-weight ratio, can transmit high mechanical loads dynamically or statically, or can effectively operate in harsh environments.
- Functional polymer-based materials: Functional materials have special properties beyond those of basic materials. Ohio’s strength in one particular area of functional materials -- functional polymer-based materials -- holds high potential for application growth.

Biosciences

- Medical devices and imaging; translational and clinical services; cardiovascular, cancer, and child health; agriculture, pharmaceuticals and homeland security project: Ohio has strength on which to build in all of these areas.
- Intersections between complimentary, well-developed technology areas and bioscience: bio-informatics, bio-materials, bio-science targeted nano-devices and advanced manufacturing all hold promise for collaboration and commercialization.
- Emerging technologies: This includes regenerative medicine and cellular engineering, and other areas defined by entrepreneurs as growing in importance.

Information Technology

- Data management: This is a specific Ohio information technology strength that cuts across all segments of industry.
- Support other technology focus areas: information technology is a crosscutting need that supports all of the other key focus areas. Ohio must invest in accelerating IT application and adoption in these areas.

Instruments, Controls, Electronics and Advanced Manufacturing Technologies

- Integration of computing, communication, measurement and control: An industry university center with this focus would help align needs with development.
- Technology transfer: Again, Ohio has an opportunity here to leverage university and research strengths.

Power and Propulsion

- Turbine technology: This directly impacts the aviation industry, where Ohio already is a leader. Spin-off technology benefits the entire power industry.
- Fuel cells: The quest for cleaner, more efficient power has sparked significant national interest in this emerging technology.

The ability to create a critical mass of these industries will provide competitive advantage in the marketplace.

Workforce

The City, along with the entire region, must have a qualified workforce to fulfill the job demands of the 21st century. The percentage of Lake County residents 25 and older with some college credit or associates degree is higher than the nation, but we are below the nation when examining those with bachelor's degrees. In Mentor, over 27 percent of those 25 and older have at least a bachelor's degree.

Understanding educational curriculums are not regulated by the City, local officials could act as a liaison between the private sector and educational community regarding the necessary technical skill sets required with emerging employment opportunities. 21st century workforce strategies set forth by the 2007 "Economic Development Strategy for Lake County" include:

- Provide businesses more workforce training assistance and financial incentives for employee training.
- Maximize K-16 educational opportunities to ensure students arrive in the workplace with essential general education, technical, and personal skills needed to succeed at their jobs.
- Ensure students arrive in the workplace with essential general education, technical and personal skills needed to succeed at their job.
- Develop a plan to change perceptions about manufacturing to attract new workers to high-tech manufacturing.
- Encourage employers to create a workplace that attracts young employees.
- Create a plan that helps younger workers understand employers' expectations, especially with regard to work ethics and interpersonal skills.

9.5 INCENTIVES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Industry recruitment and incentive efforts should be concentrated in the professional business / service sector and advanced manufacturing sector, especially businesses related to aircraft parts, medical equipment, and precision machinery. These businesses are forecasted to have the highest growth rates over the next decade, and typically offer high salaries to their workers, and may be attracted to a city like Mentor where there is an agglomeration of like manufacturers, and an available pool of skilled workers.

Infrastructure improvements in the industrial corridor, including resurfacing and widening the Lakeland Freeway (SR 2) and Tyler Blvd, upgrading intersections and expressway exits, improving connections on north-south routes with I-90, and grade separation of busy railroad crossings, will make the area more attractive to existing and future employers.

Modernizing Ohio's Economic Development Incentives

Key incentive study recommendations (ODOD)

Simplify Ohio's property tax abatement system by consolidating all Ohio tax abatement and tax increment financing statutory authority into a single integrated program.

Refocus Ohio's property tax abatement system by establishing a tiered system that targets benefits to distressed areas, discourages urban sprawl, and provides for controlled and sustainable Greenfield development.

Reduce the potential for adverse impacts on the funding of education while encouraging greater intergovernmental collaboration between school districts and units of local government.

Refocus the Job Creation Tax Credit program to emphasize payroll growth in addition to job creation. This change will allow increased business flexibility, reflect the policy focus to grow both income and jobs, and simplify reporting requirements.

Harmonize and strengthen notification requirements when a company is seeking incentives for a project that will relocate jobs from one Ohio community to another.

The State of Ohio has the following programs to offer current and future businesses:

Low Interest Loans- The Ohio Department of Development has several low interest loan programs which can provide financing for fixed assets, such as land, building, machinery, and equipment.

Ohio Enterprise Bond Fund- Taxable and tax-exempt bond financing may be available for your project through the Ohio Enterprise Bond Fund which can finance up to 90 percent of the project costs to a maximum of \$10 million. The term is subject to negotiation. The interest rate is fixed for the term of the loan and is determined at the time the bonds are issued.

166 Direct Loan- This loan would be available to help finance a manufacturing facility at 30 percent of the project cost to a maximum of \$1 million. Each of these programs would require the payment of Ohio's prevailing wage rate on the construction of any buildings.

Workforce Recruitment- The Ohio Bureau of Employment Services can provide, at no cost to a business, labor market data, workforce recruitment, and screening of new workers. Of course, final screening and selections would be done by the company.

Utility Incentive Rates- Many of Ohio's gas and electric companies have developed incentive rates for encouraging new investment in our state.

Tax Incentives- Ohio has two tax incentive programs, the **Community Reinvestment Area** (CRA) and the **Enterprise Zone** (EZ) that can provide a business with a substantial exemption on its real and/or personal property taxes. This plan recommends the creation of a CRA near the intersection of Mentor Ave. and Center St. (Map 4.18). Under the EZ Program, a company could locate its facility in Mentor and receive a tax exemption on new investments on a building, new machinery and equipment, and new inventory.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is another economic development tool available to the City (see inset narrative). Currently, there are six active TIFs in Lake County.

Ohio's Job Creation Tax Credit- The Job Development Initiative allows companies creating new jobs in Ohio to apply for a refund on their corporate franchise tax or state income tax credit. The business must apply for this credit before committing to the project.

Investment Tax Credit- The Investment Tax Credit Program creates a non-refundable corporate or state income tax credit for a company that purchases new machinery and equipment or re-tools current machinery and equipment that is located in Ohio and used for manufacturing.

Infrastructure Grants- The Ohio Department of Development has funds available for infrastructure improvements serving a project site. The funds are usually granted to a community. Eligible activities can include water or sewer line extensions, road upgrades, and rail spurs.

Ohio's Export Tax Credit- The credit provides a non-refundable franchise tax credit for companies that increase export sales.

Ohio's Research and Development Tax Credit- A sales tax exemption for equipment purchased for research and development.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

The Ohio Department of Development TIF's are a development mechanism available to local governments in Ohio to finance public infrastructure improvements and, in certain circumstances, residential rehabilitation. A TIF works by locking in the taxable worth of real property at the value it holds at the time the authorizing legislation was approved. Payments derived from the increased assessed value of any improvement to real property beyond that amount are directed towards a separate fund to finance the construction of public infrastructure defined within the TIF legislation. Local governments may authorize TIFs to fund a number of infrastructure needs including public roads and highways, water and sewer lines, remediation, land acquisition, demolition, the provision of gas, electric, and communications service facilities, and the enhancement of public waterways (note – public infrastructure does not include police or fire equipment).

The value of real property improvements are exempted from taxes through local TIF authorizing legislation enacted by the municipality, township, or county. A taxpayer whose operations are located within a TIF continues to make payments to the jurisdiction in an amount equal to the real property tax liability that otherwise would have been due had the property not been exempted. These payments in lieu of taxes, or Service Payments, are collected by the county treasurer in the same manner as real property taxes, but are deposited into separate public improvement tax increment equivalent funds.

Source: Ohio Department of Development

Further information for economic development programs can be found at odod.state.oh.us/EconomicDevelopment.htm.

In addition to State Programs, the City's Economic Development department, along with Mentor Economic Assistance Corporation (MEACO), offers the following programs:

- **MENTOR INCENTIVE GRANT (MIG)**
Annual performance based grant used to encourage payroll growth and business investment. Grant amount is based on payroll taxes paid to the City and the level of investment being made.
- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANT (E.D. GRANT)**
A one-time grant primarily for businesses that are either moving into the City or existing businesses making significant investments in machinery, equipment or building upgrades. Maximum grant is \$10,000 and is based on the amount of investment and payroll taxes paid to the City.
- **COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA ZONES (CRA)**
Targeted reinvestment areas that provide businesses with real property tax exemptions for developments that increase the property valuation resulting from new construction or remodeling of existing structures.
- **SMALL BUSINESS LOAN FUND**
Revolving loan fund created to stimulate growth and expansion of manufacturing, commercial, and retail businesses that demonstrate job creation potential. Maximum loan amount is \$25,000, with below market fixed interest rates for a term of 5 years.
- **SBA 504 LOAN PROGRAM**
The 504 loan program is an economic development financing tool administered by the Mentor Economic Assistance Corporation that provides growing businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets, such as land, buildings, and heavy machinery. Loan program works with private sector lenders to help secure financing to small businesses. Key advantages are fixed-rates, long term (20-years), and only 10% down payment.

Mentor Economic Assistance Corporation (MEACO)

Based in the Mentor Municipal Center, MEACO is a certified development company whose mission is to advance economic development opportunities within the City of Mentor. MEACO is authorized by the U.S. Small Business Administration to operate the 504 Loan Program and also manages the Mentor Small Business Loan Fund in cooperation with the City of Mentor. These programs have created more than 1,600 jobs and represent millions of dollars in investment.

Use of incentives and other government assistance, such as property acquisition through eminent domain, should not be directed at specific retail businesses where it would compete with established merchants, giving it an unfair advantage in the marketplace. Incentives should not be offered to national retailers that would probably locate in the City if such a benefit were not otherwise offered. Incentives should also not be offered for retail projects that may hurt shopping districts in surrounding communities.

Retailers establish a business at a location because a market exists for a product or service they offer. Incentives are not required to lure a new retail business, and few government agencies in the United States offer direct incentives to retailers. Economic development funds should be used to make an area more attractive to retail businesses, through infrastructure or streetscape improvements, nonconforming sign removal, façade restoration in older pedestrian-oriented business districts, or retrofitting a vacant or dying retail center into a more pedestrian-oriented urban village or upscale lifestyle center.

In-house, cost effective incentives include:

- Streamlined permitting and zoning process (in progress)
- Maintaining an inventory of construction or move-in ready sites/facilities.
- Consider the elimination of ballot box zoning referendums where piecemeal land use (job growth) decisions may be made in reaction to isolated circumstances, incorrect dissemination of information, or simply a misunderstanding on the behalf of the electorate.
- Adopt business friendly policies for new and existing companies (welcome wagon).

9.6 TARGET AREAS

Future economic development initiatives should be concentrated in the following areas:

Tyler Boulevard Corridor

Tyler Blvd. provides a unique mix of existing structures/facilities and vacant land for a wide variety of manufacturing and/or industrial needs. Minimal land use conflicts exist in the corridor due to the buffer provided by SR 2 and the railroad corridor. The critical mass of existing businesses, recent improvements to Heisley Rd. and current upgrades to SR 2 and Tyler Blvd. will allow this area to maintain a competitive advantage over other manufacturing areas.

Diamond Center

The continued population shift to central and eastern Lake County has allowed the Heisley Rd. corridor to develop as a commercial and business node. The Diamond Center will continue to grow as a destination location based on the restaurants, hotels and retail amenities available.

Future development should carefully consider traffic impacts to Heisley Rd. Over the long-term, a second ingress/egress to the area is recommended.

Lakefront / Mentor Marsh

To date, Mentor has proactively taken steps to preserve environmentally sensitive lands. When feasible, acquisition of lands near the Mentor Lagoons, Mentor Marsh and Lake Erie should continue (see Map 4.16). In addition to the open space provided to the residents, land protection and the subsequent tourism generated will continue to be a growing ‘industry’ and should be considered in future economic development planning.

Great Lakes Mall / Plaza Boulevard

Mixed use zoning and development strategies should be considered for the area surrounding the Great Lakes Mall and the Plaza Blvd. corridor. The ability to maintain closed air malls, similar to Great Lakes Mall, in an era of online retailing and open air mixed use facilities, is challenging.

While retail is the primary business use of the area, competition in the region (and within the City) has diluted the customer base. Understanding retail is important to the local economy; regional data indicates a saturation of retail space in northeast Ohio. Future development scenarios could incorporate office uses, multi-family and/or senior care residential accommodations.

I-90 / SR 615 Interchange (*Newell Creek*)

The opening of the SR 615 / I-90 interchange in 2005 provided an excellent economic development opportunity in Mentor. To date, a mix of residential units and office uses have been developed. This plan recommends the continuation of mixed use, with an emphasis on professional office and business parks capitalizing on the visible highway frontage. The location of future businesses should be examined in relationship to other potential sites in the City. For example, manufacturing oriented uses should be directed to the Tyler Blvd. corridor.

9.7 SMART GROWTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Recognizing the importance of economic development issues and their role in smart growth, in 1997, the Local Government Commission developed a set of 15 principles specifically focused on economic development. The Ahwahnee Principles for Economic Development promote the following and should be utilized to shape the decision making process in Mentor.

1. Integrated approach. Government, business, education, and the community should work together to create a vibrant local economy through a long-term investment strategy that encourages local enterprise, serves the needs of local residents, workers, businesses, promotes stable employment and revenues by building on local competitive advantages, protects the natural environment, increases social equity, and is capable of succeeding in the global marketplace. For Mentor, this means an emphasis on small-medium, locally owned businesses that offer middle-class and higher wages, which produce a product or offer a service that meets a need not just locally, but internationally.

2. Vision and inclusion. Communities and regions need a vision and strategy for economic development according to the economic principles. Visioning, planning and implementation efforts should continually involve all sectors, including the voluntary civic sector and those traditionally left out of the public planning process. The Comprehensive Plan should be a starting point for a larger economic development planning effort in the city, which includes businesses, community officials, and residents.

3. Poverty reduction. Economic development efforts should be targeted to reducing poverty by promoting jobs that match the skills of existing residents, improving the skills of low-income individuals, addressing the needs of families moving off welfare, and insuring the availability of quality affordable child care, transportation, and housing.

4. Local focus. Because each community's most valuable assets are the ones they already have, and existing businesses are already contributing to their home communities, economic development efforts should give first priority to supporting existing enterprises as the best source of business expansion and local job growth. Luring businesses away from neighboring communities is a zero-sum game that creates no new wealth in the regional economy. Community economic development should focus instead on promoting local entrepreneurship to build locally-based industries and businesses that can succeed among national and international competitors.

5. Industry clusters. Communities and regions should identify specific gaps and niches their economies can fill, and promote a diversified range of specialized industry clusters drawing on local advantages to serve local and international markets. The manufacturing sector of Lake County includes a growing cluster of businesses related to aircraft parts, medical equipment, and precision machinery. This niche could form the foundation for enhancing a manufacturing-based local economy, and compensate for the loss of heavier industrial operations. New white-collar jobs based on engineering and research in specialized industry sectors can complement manufacturing-based jobs, and provide a more diversified, recession-resistant local economy. The Tyler Blvd. corridor provides an excellent land use area for these business types.

6. Wired communities. Communities should use and invest in technology that supports the ability of local enterprises to succeed, improves civic life, and provides open access to information and resources. High-speed broadband Internet service and universal wi-fi connectivity will make the city more attractive to home-based businesses.

7. Long-term investment. Publicly supported economic development programs, investments, and subsidies should be evaluated on their long-term benefits and impacts on the whole community, not on short-term job or revenue increases. Public investments and incentives should be equitable and targeted, support environmental and social goals, and prioritize infrastructure and supportive services that promote the vitality of all local enterprises, instead of individual firms.

8. Human investment. Because human resources are so valuable in the information-nation age, communities should provide lifelong skills and learning opportunities by investing in excellent schools, post-secondary institutions, and opportunities for continuous education and training available to all. Vocational education and skills training should be continued on a regional basis, creating a pool of talent that would be an incentive for employers to locate in the area.

9. Environmental responsibility. Communities should support and pursue economic development that maintains or improves the environmental and public health. Development should respect and maintain the environmental well-being and atmosphere of the City. Efforts should be made to minimize development pressures in or near the Mentor Marsh area. To the highest extent possible, the City should direct future development to areas where similar uses exist to create a critical mass and eventually a competitive advantage to the business (see #11).

10. Corporate responsibility. Enterprises should work as civic partners and stewards, contributing to the communities and regions where they operate, protecting the natural environment, contributing to civic affairs, and providing workers with good pay, benefits, opportunities for upward mobility, and a healthy work environment.

11. Compact development. To minimize economic, social, and environmental costs and efficiently use resources and infrastructure, new development should take place in existing urban/suburban, areas before using more open space.

12. Livable communities. To protect the natural environment and increase quality of life, neighborhoods, communities and regions should have compact, multidimensional land use patterns that ensure a mix of uses, minimize the impact of cars, and promote walking, bicycling, and transit access to employment, education, recreation, entertainment, shopping, and services. Over the long-term, the Great Lakes Mall and Plaza Blvd. corridor represents an opportunity to introduce new residential development near existing retail business.

13. Center focus. Communities should have an appropriately scaled and economically healthy center focus. At the community level, a wide range of commercial, residential, cultural, civic, and recreational uses should be located in the town center or downtown. While a true downtown in Mentor may have never developed, many people identify the Great Lakes Mall area as the center of the City.

14. Distinctive communities. Having a distinctive identity will help communities create a quality of life that is attractive for business retention and future residents and private

investment. The City must work to reinforce its sense of uniqueness, attractiveness, history, and cultural and social diversity, and a strong local sense of place, keeping it distinct from other exurban communities. Mentor should capitalize on the competitive advantage provided by Lake Erie, the Mentor Lagoons, Mentor Marsh, and the high amount of manufacturing that exists.

15. Regional collaboration. Since industries, transportation, land uses, natural resources, and other key elements of a healthy economy are regional in scope, communities and the private sector should cooperate to create regional structures that promote a coherent metropolitan whole that respects local character and identity.

9.8 GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL 1

“PROMOTE A STRONG, STABLE, AND DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY WHICH MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY FOR EMPLOYMENT GOODS, SERVICES, AND A GROWING TAX BASE.”

Policies:

- A. Ensure that land use controls do not unreasonably limit the diversity of businesses permitted in the industrial and commercial districts. Revise unnecessary or cumbersome regulations and procedures which limit the community’s ability to take advantage of changes in markets and technology.
- B. Target industrial promotion efforts (advertising, technical assistance, grants, loans, etc.) toward those segments of the economy which would generate the greatest likely payback.
- C. Facilitate two-way communication with area businesses in order to promote community involvement, to be aware of their concerns, to take advantage of their skills and contacts.
- D. Encourage development of a diversified and expanding tax base, that is, an economy comprised of sufficient and varied jobs, businesses, and real property to generate adequate tax revenues to support the public facilities and services desired by the community’s residents.
- E. Promote and maintain the City’s leadership and image as a progressive, attractive, and profitable location for business development.

GOAL 2

“ENHANCE THE PRESENCE OF CHAIN /INDEPENDENT COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES.”

Policies:

- A. Focus commercial recruitment efforts on the Great Lakes Mall area & Newell Creek.
- B. Focus recruitment efforts in the “Old Village” and independent locations in general through joint meetings between businesses and property owners.
- C. Monitor retail space vacancies, in order to promote opportunities for interest.

GOAL 3

“MAINTAIN & ENHANCE THE MANUFACTURING BASE OF THE CITY.”

Policies:

- A. Retain existing business.
- B. Promote manufacturing in general and specifically in growing sectors such as biotech, information technology, and fuel cell development.
- C. Utilize Economic Development Incentives to attract and retain businesses (Mentor Incentive Grant, Economic Development Grant, Community Reinvestment Area, Small Business Loan Fund, MEACO SBA 504 Loan & TIF and State Incentives).
- D. Monitor industrial space vacancies.
- E. Active participation in the Mentor Area Chamber of Commerce Committees and other forums & organizations on an as need basis.
- F. Evaluate competitive analysis for both regional and national competitors.